

Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee
Meeting
April 19, 2007

Members Present: Genny Hardesty, Bob Middleton, Renee Okon, Jon Lourie, Nancy Schwiesow, Bryant Foulger, Abrielle Anderson, Barbara Henry and Charles Atwell

Members Absent: Edward Baca-Asher and Pete Esker

Guest: Dale Mangum, Commander Betsy Davis, Phil Olivetti, Jane Redicker, Avi Halpert, Harold Collins, Bob Hillerson, Ann Martin, Rick Siebert, Mary Pat Spon

Staff: Gary Stith, Vicki Lockerman, Jerry Sanford and Susan Hoffmann

Welcome/Introduction – Genny Hardesty, Chair called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Motion: (Foulger, Middleton) the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee approved the March 2007 minutes with amended change to page 7 from quarter of million dollars to quarter of billion dollars (1 abstention).

Chair's Report

Genny Hardesty reported that:

- On Monday, April 16 she testified before County Council for the FY08 Budget. The full Testimony is in your packet with actual literature received. The testimony outlined our major concerns which we have discuss for some time the Birchmere, south entrance to Metro Station, and additional Police etc. Councilmember George Leventhal asked Debbie Spielberg and me about a slight difference of opinions regarding Veterans Plaza. I told Councilmember Leventhal that we would like to see Veterans Plaza move forward as initially planned and do not want the project delayed. Debbie Spielberg responded that she did not want the project delayed either. Councilmember Leventhal responded that County Council wanted to hear from the people and they would do whatever the public would like. We are back to our campaign again to get the word out through letters, e-mails and phone calls. Secondly another Councilmember looked across the Board of Panelist and stated that the Police will have more money and this is a priority.

Gary Stith stated a \$400,000.00 dollar supplemental was recommended by the County Executive for the south entrance to the Metro Station over on the NOAA side but the T&E Committee is questioning whether the County should pay for this or somebody else but it would seem that if someone else was going to pay for this it would have been done by now. This needs to be done not only because of the development on the south side of the metro station on down to East West Highway but to keep the number of people from having to go around the north side during construction so that there is less pedestrian traffic in conflict with the construction and it will add a convenience for transit users. We are concerned that Council may be looking for things in the budget to cut to have money to use for other

things. We feel that this is important and you testified favorably for it but as a Committee you may want to send an e-mail or share a comment when you see Council members about this being an important contribution to Downtown Silver Spring.

Barbara Henry stated that the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce sent blast e-mails to members of County Council regarding this issue. The Chamber received a response from George Leventhal that indicated they are going to try and get NOAA to do a census on how many people use the metro from NOAA with the outcome intended to have NOAA pay for this. This is ridiculous; there are seven apartment buildings, five condos and shopping plaza not to say anything about DCTC and other businesses in that area and they are going to try and get NOAA to pay for this. Some things are Government's responsibility and this is one of them.

Gary Stith stated that the Committee has expressed their opinion through the Chair's testimony but suggested that the more numbers of responses to the issue received by Council may help.

Police Update:

Commander Davis reported that:

- Thanks to Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee for talking to Council about the Police. I met today with them for the public safety portion they were impressed with the process we use for reporting information to them such as overtime and the good mechanisms we have in place. They are comfortable with the budget we proposed and talked about supplemental funding possibly for the Police. They did mention the police overtime being high but because of court we had to work officers more and overtime cost are higher. They would like to hire more officers in addition however we are trying not to have all 60 in January but possibly split them 40 to 50 in July and the others in January to avoid overwhelming one class. Once the new officers are hired they will need to be trained for a good year so they will not be visible.
- On Mayor Lane and Thayer Avenue we have a problem with a lot of intoxicated individuals. We have assigned staff there and cited individuals. Charles Atwell and I talked with Kathie Durbin from Liquor Control about one of the establishments selling to intoxicated individuals and this will continue to be an on-going dialogue. We had discussion with Progress Place because they are going to be closing after hours and a lot of those folks will be back out on the street.
- Two of the Sober Initiative folks are out and about and they are in the process of hiring a third person. They have had contact with some people and gotten them into treatment so this is a positive step.
- We have had a lot of commercial night time burglaries throughout downtown, Glick Opticians, Jerry Sub Shop, CTL Video, RAYCO Automotive and other shops burglarized at night. We don't have a good description on anyone so our team is out trying to catch the night time burglar.
- Robberies are up in the County overall and we have had quite a few in the area, Cingular Wireless, KFC on Blair and at the same time we had shots fired at the College. We had a strong arm robbery off of Sligo Avenue near the Police Station. The Police Major Crime Division is looking into commercial robberies. Shots were fired in the Kennett Street Garage and people said they saw a truck that was either red or gray.
- With the incident that occurred at Virginia Tech we are receiving phone calls from schools and companies of individuals making threats and made numerous arrests. Tomorrow is the tenth anniversary of the Columbine School incident every school in Montgomery County will have Patrol

Officers to add extra security. If you have an employee that you are not sure of call the crisis center if you think they are off the mark and the center will guide you through an evaluation process. Since this incident has happened it has turned the table on people with mental illness and other issues. If there is a threat we have to take it as real and there are statutes in place that allow us to make an arrest and the next issue is attempting to get them into the hospital for evaluation. We have been dealing with a lot of crime and school issues.

- Attended a lot of Community meetings because people want to hear our request and they have been e-mailing County Council about the Police staffing issues.
- We have events coming up and this will be a lot of resources on the Police.
- We had a couple of burglaries in Woodside and a citizen got a tag number the suspect has been apprehended. They were DC residents that came back into Montgomery County and we caught them in the act. My advice to citizens is please be aware of your surroundings, write information down and report suspicious activity.

Barbara Henry asked if discussion has been held about some kind of cross border with the DC Police and Montgomery County like they did in Prince George's County

Commander Davis stated that Montgomery and Prince George's are basically the same but there are many liabilities and jurisdictional issues in DC that I don't see this happening in Montgomery County.

Dale Mangum publicly commended Charles Atwell for having adopted a zero tolerance policy on Mayor Lane.

814 Thayer Avenue – Residential Project

Harold Collins and other representatives gave an overview of the proposed 814 Thayer Avenue Residential Project as follows:

- The project is on the south side of Thayer Avenue, east of Fenton Street.
- The property is zoned CBD-0.5 (Central Business District, 0.5 FAR) and is proposed for development under the Optional Method Development.
- The request is for the approval of a 52 unit residential development that will consist of a single 5-story structure (4 stories of residential units) that includes on-grade parking beneath the project. Primary pedestrian entrance is proposed from Thayer Avenue; vehicular access to the on-grade parking is proposed from the alley behind the property that runs parallel to Thayer Avenue and perpendicular to Fenton Street
- The request for redeveloping the property which is currently improved with a 22,000 square foot office building and surface level parking spaces. The proposal replaces the existing building with a 52,000 square foot residential structure (developed under the Optional Method of Development at a density less than the maximum allowed in the zone. The building will be sixty feet high at its highest point and seven of the 52 residential units will be moderately priced dwelling units.
- On-site public use space will be located at the front of the building and include an attractive plaza, decorative plantings, ornamental trees, and multiple seating venues. In addition an "interpretive art wall" will be located on the western side of the building's façade at ground level. The interpretive art wall will celebrate the unique history of the Property as the former home of the National Association for the Deaf. Access to the on-grade parking is proposed from the public alley by two one-way driveways located at the rear of the building that will direct vehicular and pedestrian

circulation in the immediate area, especially for pedestrian use of the sidewalk that is being upgraded as part of the streetscape improvements along Thayer Avenue. In compliance with the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan's goal of making projects in the CBD "pedestrian friendly," alley access will eliminate the need for a driveway from Thayer Avenue into the Project, thereby creating an uninterrupted pedestrian walkway and improved streetscape from the eastern edge of the CBD across the front of the Project. This will encourage pedestrian use of the sidewalk and facilitate access to and from the CBD and Metro.

- We have presented the project to the Easter Silver Spring Civic Association on January 15, 2007. Presentation is scheduled to be held with the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Commercial and Economic Development Committee and the Silver Spring Urban Advisory Committee.
- Project Schedule of Official Approvals is as follows:
 - Preliminary Plan & Project Submission – November 30, 2006
 - Development Review – May/June, 2007 (estimate)
 - Planning Board Hearing – July/August, 2007 (estimate)
- Property is within the Silver Spring Parking Lot District and no parking is required, 37 parking spaces and spaces for two bicycle racks are provided.
- Storm water management will include a private on-site storm drain system and roof leader system
- Over 22% of the net lot area of the site is provided as on—site public space; 12% of the net lot area is proposed as off-site public amenity space
- Overhead utilities on Thayer Avenue (that front the Property) will be placed underground

For complete details of presentation please refer to handout distributed at meeting.

Q & A Discussion

Bryant Foulger asked how many unit the project would have.

Harold Collins responded 52 units and 37 parking stalls.

Gary Stith stated that DPWT is commenting about projects in downtown that the access to parking can not come off of the alley. They are requiring access to come off the street. I am not sure why but I will be having discussions with them about this requirement. The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Boards CED Committee is concerned about this issue because of creating a conflict between pedestrians on the sidewalk and traffic coming in and out of the site versus if you came off the alley there would not be that additional point of conflict. Projects that have retail frontage and because it is so close to residential an off to the edge of downtown it probably would not make sense to put retail here but there are several other projects including the next one you will see today and the Bonifant Plaza project which they are talking about putting retail on the first floor at the suggestion of people in the community and also the Adele which they have told them they can not have their access off the alley but off the street so this would take away retail frontage. This would conflict with pedestrian traffic, impacting negatively the streetscape and reducing frontage which could be used for retail uses and because of this creating some urban design issues the Committee may want to make comments.

Charles Atwell asked if there were any LEED aspects. When you talk about the streetscape going west is that something you are talking about doing as part of your project to improve it up to Fenton Street

We are not going for a LEED certification and we are early in design. We have proposed carrying the streetscape from the edge of the CBD up to Fenton. In the lots between us and Fenton Street there is not the full dedication of the right-of-way so we can only improve what is in the right-of-way.

Charles Atwell suggested that the Committee ask DPWT to send a representative to the SSUDAC meeting to address issues and they need to give a good explanation as to what their strategy is in the entire CBD from a public alley point of view and differentiate between what are alleys, streets and lanes.

Bryant Foulger stated that when DPWT comes up with a policy like this is there any counter balance between urban design and that. There needs to be some counter balance between cars and pedestrians and this is a perfect example of one idea that applied appropriately to some site but as a general policy this just seems very counter.

Gary Stith stated that the Development Review Committee at Park and Planning, DPWT representative is making these comments that any project coming in with access off the alley is denied and they are making the developer put the access on the street.

Charles Atwell suggested that Art Holmes, Director of DPWT be asked to send a representative to the next meeting and that information be received in advance to give Committee members an opportunity to review and would like to know what was the public input into the policy.

Bob Middleton stated that he was concerned about the large number of projects going up in downtown Silver Spring. The projects are fantastic and this is one of them. We are making areas more urban and have built-up downtown Silver Spring in the last seven years. I can not complain because I have been a part of it but where are all these people going to go. We can't even give them a VanGo to come from East West Highway over to downtown Silver Spring so they are going to drive but where are they going to park. They will be parking over at Wayne Avenue Garage, Town Square Garage and Cameron Garage. My concern with the 814 Thayer Avenue project is that you have 52 units and only 37 parking spaces and this is doing a disservice to your residents not only the ones that are buying but the ones that come after that. We are still a little bit away from using cars and people that grew up in the Washington DC area know that you try to use metro all the time but there are so many places you can not get to by using metro and you need a car. Since you are still in the design process is it possible for you to look at having more parking for the owners of your property at this location.

Harold Collins responded that our aspect and desire that we are in an urban area and our proximity to the metro and community around is that our thinking was not everybody would want a parking space. We are doing everything we can to maximize the number on-site parking space. We are also looking at trying to supplement in case and looking at sites nearby where we can potentially supplement the number of on site parking.

Jon Lourie stated that in regard to parking you could put more spaces on the lot by putting in a basement. I guess you are making a businesses decision that this will not affect sales of your units by not having a one to one space per unit.

Harold Collins stated it also keeps the project cost down so we are targeting more of a workforce housing low to middle market product here and to add those additional space below grade increases the

cost of the entire project at a point where you would be raising price or cost of all of the units and marketing it at a higher level than we want to market at. This project is targeted for folks in the 80 to 120 percent MAI range. The sale price in today's dollars would range from \$400,000 dollar range, to the smaller units being \$200,000.00.

Nancy Schwiesow asked if parking was going to be included in the price of the units or can people buy their own parking space.

Harold Collins responded that when it comes time to sale the units we will make some decisions but today we would probably try and separate them from the unit because we don't think everyone will want a space.

Jon Lourie stated that this project is similar to the one on Silver Spring Avenue adjacent to the residential zone setting the building back and providing landscaping is very appropriate. In this project you are stepping the building back on the side but not in the front and if you really wanted to respond to the residential character of your neighbors you would try and provide a building that has a scale and massing that is more sympathetic to the single family dwellings that are adjacent to it. There is really nothing that says residential about your front façade.

The group stated that when the Committee was ready to give a comment to the Planning Board that they hoped it would be a favorable one for the 814 Thayer Avenue Residential Project.

Studio Plaza Project:

Bob Hillerson and Ann Martin showed drawings and gave a presentation as follows:

- The Studio Plaza Project is a mixed use optional method development application consisting of 50,681 square feet in the Fenton Village area of Silver Spring located on both sides of Spring Avenue to the east of Mayor Lane alley and Georgia Avenue, south of the Public parking lot No 3 and west of Fenton Street. The property is identified as 914 Silver Spring and 9129 Silver Spring Avenue
- The Studio Plaza will consist of two residential building for the first phase each providing underground parking and ground floor retail uses. The two buildings are located to the north and south of Silver Spring Avenue and will contain a maximum of 225 multi-family residential units above ground floor retail uses approximately 15,000 sq ft. in a ten story building 90 feet to the north of Silver Spring Avenue and nine-story 90 feet building to the south of Silver Spring Avenue. Pursuant to the provisions of the Fenton Village overlay Zone, the proposed 90-foot building height is permitted in this area of Fenton Village near Georgia Avenue since the project is providing well over 33% residential uses. The two residential buildings will utilize a 22% residential density bonus based on the provision of 15% MPDUs that will be provided on-site within the two buildings. The number of residential units and MPDU percentages and locate will be determined at site plan.
- Loading and garage access area for the new building will be provided off the alleys interior to the new buildings to provide convenient services for the commercial and residential tenants and minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts on the improved streetscapes.
- There will be some improvements to the adjacent Mayor Lane alley to create a safer and more attractive vehicular connection within the CBD and reduce conflicts with the trash pick-up and driveway movement by relocating a portion of these services off the main roads and alleys to

interior, off-set building locations behind closed doors that will provide sanitation and screening of these refuse areas.

- The project will bring significant enhancement to the Fenton Village district of downtown Silver Spring is the improved streetscapes, consisting of wider, brick-paved sidewalks with street trees along a retail façade of building edge that will simultaneously frame and activate the street network and create the tightly-knit urban neighborhood, conducive to strolling and browsing as envisioned in the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan. The off-site streetscaping will be on both sides of Silver Spring Avenue and extend to connect into the Georgia Avenue streetscape.

Discussion:

Jon Lourie asked if they were basically taking out the pocket park that is on the side of the building and incorporating that into the front and extending the length of the project.

Gary Stith responded that they proposed two full lots of public open space and Park and Planning staff did not like that because they are separated by another lot are not adjacent and even though you are allowed to transfer open space within these zones to another area they are saying because it is not adjacent you can not use the density off of it because they are separated they are not a part of that project and are separate lots you can not transfer the density off of the open space.

Bryant Foulger asked if there were earlier dedication that had them as adjacent. Prior to whatever dedication created Silver Spring Avenue were these lots adjacent to one another.

Gary Stith responded no. You can transfer the open space to another location which they are proposing but Park and Planning stated because it is not adjacent to the property you can't use the density off of it they had to reduce the density and this made the economics bad and Park and Planning said they did not like it so they took it out and changed the footprint of the building to set the retail back some and added the thing on the side but again we have open space that doesn't do anything.

Jon Lourie asked about the retail being reduced by half.

Bob Hillerson stated that it included the office building and the retail was reduced in the residential by 12,500 and now we are down to 7,500 and this is if we can put our garage entrance off the alleys.

Jon Lourie asked Gary Stith what the plans are for the parking lot behind the property.

Gary Stith stated that the County put out an RFP and gotten a response but the County pulled it back because of the alignment of the purple line that cuts right through it. We have suggested that there is an alternate alignment that would go one block east of there and that it would make more sense in terms of the impact on development and development opportunities.

Charles Atwell for the record stated that Mr. Hillerson was his landlord and he has been supportive of the various rendition of this project. The good news is Mayor Lane is not an alley but a County street and not affected by the alley piece. What are you looking for today from the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee?

Bob Hillerson responded that he would like the Committee to approve the project and support retail on Silver Spring Avenue.

Charles Atwell stated that we have a serious issue with the Silver Spring team at Park and Planning.

Jon Lourie wanted to know what the utility of the two smaller parks across from each other and the plans for the parking lot behind. We need to have a larger vision then just doing it project by project.

Gary Stith responded that the reason we are not able to do this is because of the MTA alignment for the purple line.

Charles Atwell motioned and Barbara Henry 2nd that the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee send a letter to Park and Planning in support of the Studio Plaza project.

Charles Atwell stated that the footnote of the discussion in theory escalates the discussion not only on MTA reservation and the parking lot but this entire notion of the pocket parks and all the other stuff to the next level.

Barbara Henry supported the motion with a friendly amendment. That the letter focuses its attention on the larger problem and that is we have an opportunity here and we are going to let it slip between our fingers for the stupidest of reasons and it is a process reason and that the Committee's preference would be to have the project as originally planned. Charles Atwell accepted the friendly amendment proposed by Barbara Henry.

Motion: (Atwell, Henry) the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee unanimously agreed to send a letter to Park and Planning in support of the Studio Plaza project as amended by Henry and accepted by Atwell.

Bob Middleton stated that two things came out of the discussion of the 814 Thayer Avenue project that were sufficient negatives and suggested that the Committee wait to take action and see what the group comes back with. The comment regarding the angle and how it was not respectful to the neighboring communities and not convinced that they could not have done more for the project in terms of parking. If a Police Officer came up with enough money and wanted to buy property and had supporting funds to help them these officers would not necessarily have parking. I understand that one of the benefits of being a Police Officer in Montgomery County and living in the County is to bring your vehicle home. What sense does it make if the people have the money to buy but can not take their car home because of insufficient parking space. Perhaps this example is somewhat extreme but when you talk about workforce housing you are talking about police, fire & rescue, teachers and nurses that would need their vehicles and therefore I was not persuaded by the presentation of the 814 Thayer Avenue project.

Downtown Retail Strategies

Gary Stith reported that:

- On page 26 of the packet is the matrix outlining some of the recommendations in the ULI Strategy Report. I listed these and tried to indicate what agency might take the lead and be involved in a particular issue, the types of process whether it was budget or zoning issue that needed to be dealt

with and what kind of timeframe. Which items might be short-term in terms of implementation what items would be more long-term and what kind of resources might be required. The purpose of the ULI Strategy Report was to generate ideas from people that have expertise in the area and make suggestions. This is not a plan to be implemented in totality its really more to stimulate discussions and get you thinking about what kinds of things can be done to retain existing retail and to attract new retail. We have been discussing some zoning issues and I received a note from Glenn Kreger that Park and Planning is working on the CBD zoning amendments but it is a very complicated subject. They are having to look at unintended consequences and be sensitive to the fact if it is an amendment to the CBD zone in totality and not just the application to an overlay zone it will affect all of the CBD zones here in Silver Spring, Wheaton and Bethesda and they are continuing to work on it.

- I have presented this matrix to the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board CED Committee, Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee. What I need is feedback on which of these items makes the most sense for us to focus on and actually start a process of trying to implement. If it is a Capital Project we need to prepare some type of facility plans and cost estimates to incorporate in next years CIP. I am looking for direction from this Committee and others in the community to come up with a list of items that make the most sense, have the greatest impact and that could be implemented.

Barbara Henry stated that some of the items don't come on-line for some time such as the fire station.

Gary Stith stated that the fire station process has already started because a group is buying the firehouse. We will be supportive of their efforts and provide information about whatever existing incentive are out there.

Barbara Henry stated the matrix recommendation states using the fire station as a catalyst. Some sort of community developed around Mi Rancho and Cubano because if you go there 1:00 in the morning there is activity and the same thing could happen here but if you are going to use the fire station as catalyst it needs to be there so it is a timing issue.

Gary Stith stated that this is the reason the fire station was identified as mid-term rather than short term.

Barbara Henry asked Gary Stith whether he had a recommendation to get some type of momentum going.

Bryant Foulger stated that whatever the plan is going to be to capitalize on the fire station should be ready to go as soon as they open. This is a very important catalyst down in that area and it is an architectural landmark, people know about it, it's in a prominent location and visibility etc.

Bob Middleton suggested that they attach as many dates as possible to get the biggest bang for the buck. If indeed the fire house is going to be the first thing that comes on-line and the projects that comes up every five or six months like the new firehouse where they are planning to have something on the fourth floor comes up and becomes an attraction we can have that ready to feed into what is going on and see how that dove tails into the Birchmere. I am concerned that along Georgia Avenue we are seeing so many more gaps, Rodeo, Georgia Blue, and Half Moon restaurants are closed. We have all these

vacancies on both sides of the street the sooner we can fill in things we could have Silver Spring 2 or the rebirth. We need to keep people coming and let them know they can not all fit on Ellsworth at one time.

Barbara Henry asked Gary Stith if some smaller subcommittee could help to work on the matrix

Gary Stith responded that if members of the Committee wanted to volunteer to work on the matrix in coming up with a list of items that make the most sense, have the greatest impact and that could be implemented it would be helpful.

Barbara Henry volunteered to work on the matrix.

Susan Hoffmann stated that the fire station is an important issue and we need to be setting up meetings to move to the next step and see how we can work together to market what they are doing and enhance what we are doing.

Gary Stith stated that in the retail strategy book it talked about trying to create an identity and marketing the area as being distinct from the rest of downtown. They were suggesting South of Bonifant (SOBO) but because of the old fire station and the new fire station it becomes an identity for that area and we could build on that but we need money for marketing. We need to work with the businesses in the area to try and develop some ideas. As a long-term item we need to generate and upgrade the streetscape in that part of downtown. One recommendation was to cut down the existing trees and replace them with a more appropriate species that is not as dense as the Zelkova we have now. We have pruned and thinned the trees out but they are very heavy. This restricts you from seeing the signs of the retail businesses, blocks the sunlight and streetlights making it dark in those areas especially at night. We feel that there are more appropriate species of trees for an urban setting that would give color and soften things and not be so dense.

Barbara Henry stated that the retailers in that area are complaining because when you drive down Georgia Avenue you can't see their businesses signs and it is killing business.

Bob Middleton volunteered to work with Barbara Henry and Gary Stith on the matrix. He also stated that he thought the County Executive was scheduled to be in downtown Silver Spring on July 19 for a Town Hall meeting.

Bryant Foulger asked what the status was of the City Place Project Plan

Gary Stith responded that the City Place Project Plan is into Park and Planning and they are still working on it.

Marketing and Special Events

Susan Hoffmann reported that:

- There will be a tribute to Mrs. Ida Ruben on April 25 and I hope you can attend.

Barbara Henry stated that Mrs. Ruben gave more than 30 years of her life to Montgomery County, Silver Spring and the State of Maryland and if we can't give up \$50.00 bucket to say thank you

something is wrong. AFI, the project, Blair High School and a huge list of items that would not be here if not for her and the funds will go to charity.

- There will be a Harry Potter Midnight Magic event on July 20 at 7:00 p.m. and at 12:01 a.m. on July 21 is when you can purchase the new book and they are turning Ellsworth into Diagon Alley.
- Silver Spring Day event will be in the Arts Alley beside Moorenko's and Mayorga on April 21, 10-4 p.m. by Suburban Washington Resettlement Center. The Resettlement Center is a new neighbor in Silver Spring and they help people seeking asylum and running away from a place where they have been abused, they feel unsafe and seeking political asylum.
- There will be a MOJO at SOPO event next week and it is a big arts festival in the arts alley with entertainment. The Silver Spring Urban District has provided support in the following ways we hired and paid for J.B. McDermott and Western Bob to play for and 1 ½ hours and we are having three street banners to help promote the event.
- May 20 there will be a Kennett Street Block Party that is being organized primarily by Gateway in conjunction with the Urban District. This is a block party for all the people living in the residential hi-rises new and existing in South Silver Spring. This is a great community builder with lots of entertainment. They have formed a South Silver Spring Civic Association. The MOJO to SOPO is also being put on by South Silver Spring Merchant Association which is fairly new organization and John Landis of Crisfield is the head of it but lots of the merchant in the area are very active.

Bryant Foulger announced the fountain at Silver Plaza is running.

Jane Redicker announced that LA Fitness is having its grand opening on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. The official ribbon cutting is between 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Urban District Report

Jerry Sanford reported that:

- Six Urban District staff graduated from County Fire & Rescue Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Class. This is a national program with the local Fire Department and the staff learned skills about lights, search and rescue.
- Last month we began a monthly training indefinitely on customer service. The training was set-up through instructors at Montgomery College and County Human Resource Office. Instead of getting an out of the box type training we have specifically designed this training for the Urban District Staff and issues they deal with daily.
- The Urban District Staff is dealing with spring clean-up, working with DPWT on pothole repairs, and all the improvement that you see in the area and things are on schedule.
- Urban District has begun the process of an internal reporting system that will allow us to track data better and put together a more detailed report for the Committee and for budget purposes. We want to add a component to allow people to submit requests on-line. We hope to have this up and running by mid-summer and by fall have access to the public.
- We are still in the process of hiring some entry level positions. If you know of anyone that is outgoing, charismatic and has a maintenance, customer service or security background please inform them of the openings. The maintenance salary is between \$25,000 and \$27,000, this is not the highest of entry level salaries.

Discussion

Bob Middleton asked Jerry Sanford how the Urban District was doing on retention of staff.

Jerry Sanford responded that the Urban District retention level is good. Some of the hiring is because of the transit center, the additional 8 new positions and we lost a couple of staff within the last few months. Hiring is a long process because it is hard to find good workers and people that like working outside. For every 100 application we see we probably hire one or two people because we are very selective.

New Business

Barbara Henry announced that Discovery would be doing a live broadcast in the lobby on May 6, which means we will be blocking off part of the right-a-way. The Broadcast will be living with cancer and every single person in the audience is either a cancer survivor or a love one of a cancer survivor from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. On May 9 the Globe Education Fund Gala is at Discovery.

Director Report

Gary Stith reported that:

- We have been taking applications for positions on Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee and the Chamber and the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board are making nominations. Bryant Foulger has served two full terms on the Committee and his position is limited to being filled by an Optional Method Development representative. I need volunteers from the Committee on the interview panel

Genny Hardesty and Nancy Schwiesow volunteered to be on the interview panel for potential new applicants to the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee.

- We have had discussions on criteria for reviewing development projects and what types of things are appropriate for the Committee to be looking at and commenting on when you get presentations on projects. Jon Lourie thought it would be good to bring in Park and Planning Staff to discuss this and it would be an opportunity to talk with them about other issues of concern. I have spoken with Glenn Kreger and he plans to attend the SSUDAC May meeting provided he does not have an item on the Planning Board agenda.
- PFA donated one Segaway to the Police Department and thanks to them for doing that.
- NPR is looking for a new headquarters location and the Regional Center and DED are working with them. Silver Spring is the only site they are looking at in the state of Maryland. They are looking for 400,000 square feet of office space. In terms of incentives amenities, location of site and configuration of the site I think we can be competitive. This would be really great for Silver Spring and they are putting out an RFP in May.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.